UNDER FIRE

A European War story based on the drama of ROI COOPER MEGRUE

SYNOPSIS.

—11—

The chief characters are Ethel Willoughby, Henry Streetman and Capt. Larry Redmond. The minor characters are Sir George Wagstaff of the British admiralty and Charles Brown, a New York newspaper correspondent. Ethel, a resident of Sir George's household, secretly married to Streetman, a German spy, though she did not know him as such. Captain Redmond, her old lover, returns to England after long absence. From him she learns the truth about Streetman; furthermore, that he has betrayed her simply to learn naval secrets. The European war breaks out. Ethel prepares to accompany Streetman to Brussels as a German spy in order to get revenge and serve England. Captain Redmond, Ethel and Charlie Brown turn up at a Belgian inn as the German army comes. She is Madame De Lorde. She begins to work with a French spy. The Germans appear at the inn.

CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

"Here, please!" she said to the lieutenant. From the bosom of her gown she had drawn forth a small gold medal, which hung upon a ribbon about her neck.

He looked at it closely, for Lieutenant Baum was no man to take unnecessary risks. Thoroughness was his middle name.

"From the German secret service, the Wilhelmstrasse!" he exclaimed, when he had satisfied himself. "Your pardon, madame! I did not understand." And he bowed deeply.

She acknowledged his apology with the slightest of nods. And with an assumed calm that she was far from feeling, she said to him in a confidential manner:

"I am here on a confidential mission, and one thing at once I must know. Tell me, lieutenant, by which road do we march to attack the fortress at the frontier?"

"By the left fork, madame," he answered without hesitation. That token from the Wilhelmstrasse—obtained from Streetman—had quite disarmed his suspicions.

"Good! Good!" Ethel exclaimed. "I have studied the country hereabouts. That is the best way. . . . Good night!"

"Madame shall not be disturbed further," the lieutenant promised. "I will explain to the major when he returns."

"Thank you so much! You have been so very nice to me!"

"Madame is welcome," he said, with another low bow.

Smiling happily, Ethel left him. She congratulated herself, both because she had escaped detection and because she had obtained the information that was so vital to the French.

As he watched her departure, the young German officer smiled likewise. It was good to have a few minutes' talk with a lady of his own class, after the canaille with which he had been obliged to mingle since the great drive began. And, puffing out his chest to its largest dimensions, he stepped into the street. In his complacency over work that he considered well done he had entirely forgotten that there still remained another suspect to question—the innkeeper's American gentleman.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Brown Finds His War.

Lieutenant Baum had been gone but a short time when Sergeant Schmidt appeared, bringing Brown with him. The German "noncom" looked about in vain for his lieutenant, who had ordered him to fetch the American. But only two of his mates, Otto and Hans, remained in the room, standing guard at the street door.

Sergeant Schmidt was nonplused. It was not like Lieutenant Baum to fail one like that. And he gurgled a few throaty German words in his surprise. There seemed nothing to do then but assume the task himself—the duty of examining his prisoner, for so he regarded the interested Mr. Brown, who was already making mental notes of the proceedings, which he intended to use for the embellishment of the stories he would send his paper later.

Charlie had paused just inside the door through which he had entered the room. And now the sergeant beckoned to him violently.

"Komm hier!" he commanded.

At that peremptory command Mr. Brown regarded him with mild surprise and a total lack of comprehension. But the sign language was plain enough. So Charlie drew near to that formidable-looking automaton.

"Was thust du hier?" Sergeant Schmidt demanded fiercely.

Mr. Brown appeared to consider him a huge joke. At least he glanced past his frowning interrogator at Hans and Otto and laughed outright.

"I don't get you. Why don't you speak English?" he replied.

But the sergeant stolidly repeated his question.

"Oh, shut up!" Mr. Brown said impatiently.

"Du bist ein Engiaender," Schmidt announced with a malevolent glare at his captive.

"No, I'm an American," he explained.

"Amerikaner?" the sergeant repeated dubiously.

"Yes, Americane!" Charlie mimicked him, congratulating himself that the German language offered fewer difficulties than the French. He even began to pride himself on being a natural linguist. And in order to convince this fellow beyond a possibility of doubt, he reached a hand toward his hip pocket, where he carried his identification papers.

Sergeant Schmidt's eagle eye no sooner detected the move of hand toward hip than he thrust his revolver into Mr. Brown's stomach.

"Halt!"

That was something that Charlie understood without difficulty, too. He raised both hands above his head as high as he could get them, while a look of ineffable disgust suffused his face.

"You d——n fool," he exclaimed. "I'm not reaching for a gun. These are my passports. Look! Papers!" With a shake and a twist he managed to throw his coat back from his right hip. And Sergeant Schmidt then proceeded to relieve him of the bulky packet that projected from the pocket. He looked at them with a scowl.

"Ah, you are Franzoesisch!" he declared, still in his native tongue, for he knew no other.

"I'm what?" Charlie inquired.

"Franzoesisch! You are no Amerikaner."

Charlie grasped only the last word.

"Yes, that's right—Americane, right from the corner of Forty-second street and Broadway; and, believe me, I wish I was right back there right now."

"What do you say?" the sergeant asked him.

"None of your d——n business. . . . You bonehead." . . . Mr. Brown was quite enjoying himself, abusing that walking arsenal with impunity. "Have a cigarette?" he asked, holding out his case.

Sergeant Schmidt was not above accepting one, even from the enemy. And he thanked Charlie in a voice as gentle as a bass drum.

"Gee, I'd like to give you one good wallop on the nose just for luck," the American remarked longingly.

Then Schmidt suddenly snatched off Mr. Brown's hat.

"Nix on the Herrmann stuff—what are you doing?" Charlie demanded. He began to feel as if he were taking part in a slapstick vaudeville skit.

The sergeant had his face buried inside the hat. He was looking for clues.

"Englisch!" he sputtered the next moment.

"Of course it's English!" Charlie retorted. "It cost me two-and-six," he added, regarding the rough handling of his straw with indignation.

Sergeant Schmidt leaned over, and, seizing Charlie's coat by the collar, he pulled it back from his neck while he examined the label.

"English also. Spion! Thou art an English spy!"

His trusty henchmen, Hans and Otto, together with their corporal, brought their guns up to their sides; and, hissing "Spion!" in the most sinister manner imaginable, they all three approached Charlie threateningly.

Mr. Brown suddenly changed his mind about the vaudeville. It seemed to him that possibly he had been unwittingly cast for a tragedy.

"Spion—spion!" he repeated. "Good grief, you don't mean spy?"

"Spy, spy—ja wohl," said Schmidt. "Komm hier!"

He took hold of Charlie's arm and faced him about so that he confronted

"From the German Secret Service, the Wilhelmstrasse!" He Exclaimed.

the trio of formidable soldiers. And then the sergeant ordered them to load.

Charlie observed the operation with increasing alarm.

"Good God, you're not going to shoot me!" he cried. "I'm not English. I'm not a spy." And remembering all at once that the girl whom he had first met at the house of Sir George Wagstaff in London could speak German, he yelled at the top of his voice, "Madame de Lorde! Madame de Lorde!"

The two privates were aiming at him now. And he faced them indignantly. His anger was already beginning to get the better of his fear.

"Say—if you shoot me there are a hundred million people back there who're going to be sore as hell!" he snarled. "They'll come over here and blow you off the face of the earth."

At an order from the sergeant the corporal and one of the privates then grasped their victim and hustled him across the room.

"Say—what are you going to do with me?" Charlie asked. "Let me alone!" And again he called loudly for Ethel Willoughby.

To his immense relief, at that moment she appeared.

"What are you doing?" she asked the sergeant.

"It is not your affair," he retorted gruffly.

She showed her medal to him—the medal from the Wilhelmstrasse.

"Do you know that?" she inquired.

He did. And immediately he cried "Halt" to Charlie's captors. They released him at once.

"Gosh, I'm glad you're not deaf," Mr. Brown told Ethel with immense relief, as he crossed the room to where she stood.

"He is an English spy," the sergeant protested to the girl.

"No, no, no—you are mistaken," she said. "He is an American."

"They're going to shoot me!" Charlie told her. He did not yet feel safely out of the woods. "For heaven's sake, tell them I'm not a spy."

"I have just told them," she assured him.

"I know. Make sure! Tell 'em again!" he urged her. "Ask if there isn't someone who speaks English."

Questioned as to whether there were not some officer who understood English, the sergeant informed Ethel that Major von Brenig knew the hateful language.

"For the love of Mike, get him here!" Charlie besought her, when she explained to him.

While Sergeant Schmidt betook himself away in order to summon the major, Charlie Brown turned to Ethel with an air of great relief.

"Well, I was looking for a war, and I certainly picked out the right spot, didn't I?" he asked.

"I suppose mistakes like this are bound to happen. But haven't you papers to prove your identity?" she inquired.

"Oh, yes—yes! French passports, and an English hat and English clothes! All I needed to really finish me was a Russian blouse," he said with a grin. "Seriously though," he went on, "I do want to thank you." He offered her his hand.

"It was nothing," she said, as she shook hands with him.

Before the major arrived Ethel left him, after promising that she would not go so far away that he might not call her in case he needed her assistance again.

The sight of the fatherly appearing major, whose bearded face soon showed in the doorway, went far to restore Charlie's equanimity.

"The spy—where is the spy?" Major von Brenig asked the sergeant, who followed close at his heels.

Charlie Brown did not wait for the "noncom" to answer. He stepped forward expectantly.

"Are you Major von Brenig—and do you speak English?" he inquired.

"I am, and I do," the officer said.

Mr. Brown smiled at him winningly.

"Fitzsimmons there has my passports," he announced, pointing to the lanky sergeant.

Major von Brenig took the papers from the sergeant and looked them over.

"They seem to be in good order," he said—"vised by the American consul in Paris."

"And here's a letter from the paper I work for," Charlie added, handing the major an envelope.

The German officer merely looked at the imprint in one corner. He did not even take the letter from the American.

"It's a good newspaper. I've often read it," he remarked. And he returned the passport to its owner. "Now what is the trouble?" he asked.

"These guys were just going to shoot me as an English spy," Charlie informed him, with an indignant glance at the soldiers.

The major laughed in his face.

"You English?" he cried. "No one but an American ever said 'guy'!" He appeared greatly amused. "I am glad my men did not make the mistake of killing you," he said pleasantly.

"You've nothing on me," Charlie told him.

CHAPTER XVI.

Interviewing the Major.

The sergeant saluted, clicked his spurs together, moved majestically to a position in front of the cigar case, and clicked his heels again. Judging by his movements, one might almost have supposed him to be some great mechanical doll. But Charlie Brown was quite certain that he, for one, had no desire to play with him.

"I feel much better now," he told the major.

"I can imagine," the other said.

"You speak very good English," the American remarked generously.

"Why not?" the officer asked. "I spent three years at Columbia."

Mr. Brown's newspaper instinct crowded to the front again.

"By Jove! You're a German! You're in the army—you speak English! . . . It's too good a chance to miss! Say, can I interview you?"

Major von Brenig regarded him curiously for a moment. He seemed to consider that the American would be a satisfactory person to talk to, for he said presently:

"Yes—for I should like America to understand, to realize what Germany is fighting for."

"Fine!" Charlie exulted. "Can Germany win?" he demanded, looking up at Major von Brenig in his most professional manner.

"It is inevitable—there is no chance to fail," the officer replied.

"And what is Germany going to gain from the war—if she wins?"

"When she wins, you mean," the major corrected him stiffly.

"Well, when she wins," Charlie conceded.

"She will be the greatest power in the world!"

"Except the United States!" Charlie interposed.

"Do not let us discuss your country, sir! You are my guest."

Charlie rose and bowed to the German.

"I get you!" he said. "Oh, just a minute!" he added, since the major

"They're Going to Shoot Me!"

appeared to consider the interview at an end. "And what about England?" he asked, dropping into the chair once more.

That question was one that the German officer was only too ready to take up.

"What army has England?" And straightway he gave the answer. "None! In only one thing is England our superior—in lies and intrigues! There she has always been our master; but she will not fight. That is for France and Russia to do. But if the war lasts they will grow weary of being the catspaw. . . . England is a fine example of your happy American phrase, 'Let George do it!'"

"And the French?" Charlie persisted.

"The French! For forty years they have been thinking of what some day they would do to Germany; and while they thought, we have planned, we have worked—and now today we are ready—and they are not!"

"You seem very confident," Charlie told him.

"Why not? . . . For forty years our men of brains have been planning a system—the most marvelous system in the world!"

"What a pity it isn't devoted to peace instead of war," the American said somewhat pensively. All the while, as they talked, the boom of field guns in the distance punctuated their sentences.

"In the end it will be for peace," Major von Brenig said gravely, "the peace of the world. For this is a just war—and justice must triumph."

"But what of these poor people—these noncombatants—who streamed through here a little while ago?"

"It is the habit of an invaded country to proclaim the invaders as barbarians," the Teuton replied warmly. "But we Germans are not barbarians. We are a simple people fighting only for our fatherland."

"And the ruined towns—destroyed homes—and civilians shot?"

But Major von Brenig had always an answer ready. He was an honest man; and he was convinced of the justice of the German cause.

"If we are fighting soldiers we treat them as soldiers," he pointed out. "But if men or women lurk behind closed shutters or on housetops to shoot our men we shall burn the house they live in and if there is resistance we shall kill all those who resist. It is regrettable, but we must stop guerrilla warfare. We must fight under the laws of civilization."

Another roar as of distant thunder interrupted Charlie Brown's next question.

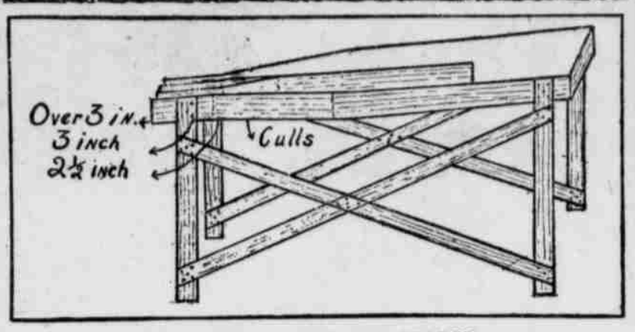
"And you call that civilization?" he demanded, while the windows of the Lion d'Or rattled under the shock of the distant cannonading.

"I do!"

"I am your guest," Charlie said. So far as he was concerned, he had heard enough. In fact, he had heard almost too much for his own peace of mind. "I think we'd better not continue this discussion or we might get into an argument—and that wouldn't be diplomatic."

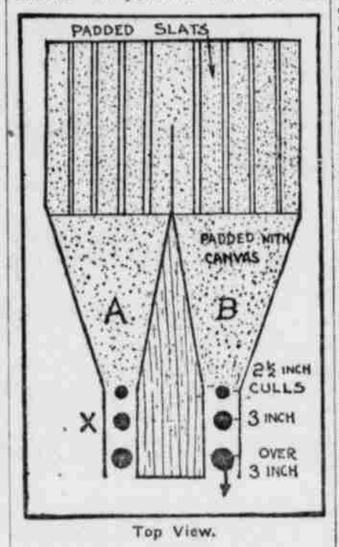
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PLAN FOR CONSTRUCTING APPLE GRADER



SIDE VIEW OF SIZER AND GRADER.

The accompanying drawings show a method of constructing and operating a homemade apple sizer and grader suitable for use in small orchards. No power is used but the



Top View.

view of the sizer. The fruit is poured onto the padded slats at the top and rolls down over the padded portions at A and B. A man or a woman stands at either side opposite the second opening X and with one hand picks out the diseased and wormy fruit and with the other keeps the fruit from rolling down too rapidly and guides it over the different openings. As the fruit passes slowly over the openings the smallest, which is too small for barreling, falls through the first hole and goes in with the culls. The next larger falls through the next hole and is carried away by a canvas trough into suitable bins. The next falls through the largest hole to make the second grade, while the largest rolls over the end and makes the third and largest grade.

No exact dimensions are given as they may be varied to suit the requirements of the user. A convenient size is about 3 feet wide by 5 or 6 feet long. It should be made as light as possible so that it may be easily moved about and should not have too much slope or slant as the efficiency is greater when the fruit does not crowd down upon the operators too rapidly. The holes should be at least six inches apart in order that the canvas troughs may be easily adjusted to carry away the different grades.

After a little practice surprisingly quick and accurate work may be done with this simple device.—National Stockman and Farmer.

grading can be done much more rapidly and accurately than when done entirely by hand.

The upper drawing shows the top

PRUNE FRUIT TREES AFTER LEAVES FALL

More Severely Work Is Done More Likelihood of Sprouts—Some Essentials.

(By LEONARD G. HERRON, Department of Horticulture, Oklahoma A. and M. College, Stillwater.)

When all the leaves have fallen from the trees and the wood has ripened up in the fall is the time for pruning. There is no way of absolutely controlling sprouting after pruning. The more severely you prune the more likely you will be to have sprouts, for the trees have stored up a quantity of food and are going to make use of it some place. If a large part of the old wood has been cut off, the part that remains will probably make a stronger growth than it would had all the old wood remained. Still there is always a tendency for a pruned tree to have sprouts. Some varieties are much worse than others in this respect. If very desirous of having the trunks of the trees smooth and without branches, the only thing to do is to rub the young sprouts off continually while they are young.

After an orchard is established, several things are necessary in order to keep it in good shape and to keep it bearing profitably. Thorough and persistent cultivation, regular pruning and spraying and thinning of the fruit in case of large crops are all essential. The cultivation should start just as early in the spring as possible and continue until the last of September. The disk harrow and the acme harrow are the two best orchard cultivators. If these are used carefully it will not be necessary to turn the ground with a plow very often.

WHY SWEET CLOVER IS VALUABLE PLANT

Makes Excellent Pasture for All Kinds of Live Stock—Rarely Causes Bloat.

Sweet clover, or white Bokhara clover, is a perennial leguminous plant of tall shrublike growth. Kansas Experimental Circular No. 44 says:

"Sweet clover makes excellent pasture for cattle, sheep, horses and hogs. It very rarely causes bloat, and for this reason is preferable to alfalfa for pasturing stock. Because of its vigorous growing habits sweet clover will pasture, especially on the poorer type of soil, more stock per acre than most other pasture grasses or legumes. Sweet clover is about equal to alfalfa and red clover in feeding value, and stock pastured on it make gains that compare favorably with those secured on the latter crops.

"Sweet clover can be used to a good advantage in supplementing other pasture. It produces early and late grazing, survives the midsummer droughts, often furnishing succulent pasture during the time regular pasture grasses are dormant, and will produce fairly well on soils that would otherwise be practically barren."

SOUND APPLES ARE ALWAYS IN DEMAND

Cause of Glut in Market in Fall Is Lack of Spraying, Says Nebraska Expert.

The chief cause of a glut of apples and, consequently, the practice of feeding apples to hogs, is lack of spraying, according to a Nebraska horticultural expert. Sound apples, the result of spraying, can be placed in cold storage because they will keep. But the apple grower who has not sprayed his apples finds them wormy and unfit for storage. So he, with thousands of others, throws his perishable apples on the market at the mercy of dealers and the public.

He takes what he can get because he must sell. You seldom hear of a glut of apples late in the winter, and the winter and spring are the times when the man who raises sound apples sells them and gets the money.

CROP ROTATION TO MAINTAIN FERTILITY

Value of Practice Is Shown by Wheat Yields at Ohio Experiment Station.

The value of crop rotation in maintaining soil fertility is shown by wheat yields at the Ohio experiment station at Wooster. Where unfertilized wheat has been grown continuously, year after year, it has yielded only 7½ bushels per acre, as an average for 20 years. By growing the crop in a five-year rotation of corn, oats, wheat, clover and timothy, this yield has been increased 42 per cent. In a three-year rotation of corn, wheat and clover, a gain of 50 per cent in yield has been realized.

On manured land wheat in continuous culture has yielded less than 18 bushels per acre. In the five-year rotation it has given 22 bushels per acre where manure has been applied to this crop, and in the three-year rotation wheat following manured corn, the wheat itself receiving no manure, has averaged 20 bushels per acre.

WORMY CONDITION OF FRUITS

Trouble With Plums, Peaches and Cherries Attributed to Plum Curculio—How to Control.

Plums, peaches and cherries often contain worms. The cause of this wormy condition of these fruits is attributed to the plum curculio. This insect lays its eggs in the newly formed fruit and the eggs hatch and the larvae work through the inside of the fruit and render it worthless. The plum curculio may be effectively controlled by the use of arsenate of lead. The trees should be sprayed just as the shucks fall from the newly formed fruit with two pounds of arsenate of lead to 50 pounds of water.

Discipline.

"I bought my boy a bicycle the other day, and the first thing he did was to take it all apart."

"Did you punish him for that?"

"I certainly did. I told him that I'd never buy him an automobile until he learned to put the bicycle together again."

The Japanese are paying much attention to Australian ores suitable for refining or smelting in Japan.

The swallow has a larger mouth in proportion to its size than any other bird.